Internships for Course Credit: TECM 4920 and TECM 5640[1]

Internships provide an opportunity to apply knowledge and skills gained in course work in the workplace and to acquire hands-on professional experience with professional supervision before graduation. Both undergraduate and graduate students in the Department of Technical Communication pursue internships for course credit.

This is an option for BA and BS majors (TECM 4920: Cooperative Education in Technical Communication – 3 credit hours) and a requirement for MA students (TECM 5640: Practicum in Technical Communication – 6 credit hours).

All internships for TECM course credit are supervised by the Director of Corporate Relations:

>Kim Sydow Campbell, PhD (aka "Dr. Kim")
>Professor
>Department of Technical Communication
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Requirements to Enroll

To be eligible for TECM 5640, graduate students must have completed the majority of their graduate TECM coursework and have a B or higher GPA in that coursework. For TECM 4920, undergraduate students must have completed TECM 2700.

The Department of Technical Communication advertises positions (primarily from Dr. Kim on LinkedIn or Twitter), invites potential employers to campus, and helps students prepare job application materials. However, students are ultimately responsible for identifying and securing their own internship positions.

A position qualifies for course credit when it meets the following criteria:

- advertised as a position in (or directly related to) technical communication (e.g., technical writing/editing, content development/management, web design/development, or UX design/research)
- supports work with a direct supervisor (no volunteer work)
- provides a minimum of 200 work hours for 3 course credits at the undergraduate level (TECM 4920), equivalent to 10 weeks working 20 hours per week or 5 weeks working 40 hours per week, OR provides a

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minimum of 400 work hours for 6 course credits at the graduate level (TECM 5640), equivalent to 10 weeks working 40 hours per week

The position is not required to be advertised as an internship. Full- or part-time positions that meet the qualifications above can be used to earn course credit.

Obtaining Approval to Enroll

Students must submit the following to the Director of Corporate Relations:

1. job description, including the job title, tasks, and company name
2. their supervisor's name and contact information
3. beginning and ending dates for the internship experience

When the Director has approved, students are enrolled by the department. They cannot enroll themselves.

Negotiating the Timing of Enrollment

After approval, the Director of Corporate Relations can discuss options for the timing of enrollment. Students can enroll during fall, spring or summer terms.

The Department recognizes that the rest of the world does not operate on UNT semesters or terms. If students are offered a position that starts after the deadline for enrolling in a current UNT semester, they may be able to complete the requirements (listed below) before they are officially registered for course credit.

All negotiations about the timing of enrollment must be approved by the Director of Corporate Relations in advance.

Requirements After Approval

After approval of the internship for course credit in TECM 4920 or TECM 5640, a student must follow these guidelines to earn a grade for the internship course. Enrolled students will be added to a course site on Canvas.

Submitting Status Reports

Students must submit two reports to the Director of Corporate Relations via Canvas.

- Midterm Status Report
- Final Status Report

These reports should include information about the student's work, an evaluation of what they have learned, and samples of their work products. If work products are proprietary, the student must contact the Director so the Department can work with the student's supervisor to obtain permission to share those products.

More information about the requirements for these reports and their specific due dates for each term will be found in the assignment descriptions on the Canvas course site.

Ensuring Supervisor Evaluations

Supervisors must submit two confidential evaluations of the student's work to the Director of Corporate Relations: one at the mid-point and one at the end of the internship experience. The supervisor must verify the number of weeks and hours worked per week.

The specific due dates for each term will be found on the Canvas course site. Students are responsible for informing their supervisors of these deadlines and requirements although the Director will contact supervisors directly when supervisor evaluations are due.

Sharing Internship Experiences

Students will create a video presentation of work products and details about their internship experiences. Previous videos can be viewed on the Department's YouTube channel.

Students are required to submit a dry run of the presentation and then meet with the Director of Corporate Relations to discuss it. They may be required to revise the video to meet requirements before completion of the course.

Again, the specific details and due dates for each term will be found on the Canvas course site.

Other Important Information

Students should be careful to understand the financial implications of enrollment in an internship course.

Although students may enroll in the internship course in any semester, if they are not enrolled in any other courses during that term, a student may not be eligible for financial aid because he/she will not be registered at least half-time. Thus, summer is typically the ideal time for undergraduate students to enroll in the course.

Enrollment in an internship during fall or spring terms, when it reduces the number of course credits completed during those terms may also negatively affect an undergraduate student's eligibility for the Eagle Express Tuition Plan, up to a $3,000 credit for graduating "on time." See UNT's financial affairs office to get specific details.